

Short list



Bucher: home from the sea

A Matter of Accountability by Trevor Armbrister (Barrie and Jenkins, £3.75). The full story of what happened to the Pueblo, the American spy ship that was captured by the North Koreans in 1968, with interviews with all the principals. This book, with 405 pages full of colour, quotations and sound effects (Ba-rooom, Ba-rooom, Ba-rooom went the shellfire) would make a good film script and will please those who feel, as the author does, that Captain Lloyd Bucher was a tragic figure made a scapegoat for bungling higher up in the American navy. The book, however, must be classified as a reconstruction rather than an analysis of the incident, journalism rather than history.

Let's Look at the Figures by D. J. Bartholomew and E. E. Bassett (Penguin, 40p). For better or for worse, statisticians are becoming increasingly interested in applying the tricks of their trade to human affairs, although these are a tough subject for quantitative study. Here two teachers tell the layman something about the problems and techniques (no real mathematics, but questions and answers for those who like tests) involved in opinion polls, intelligence tests, election predictions, statistics of war, and so on. There is also a glossary of the jargon.

The Workers' Union by Richard Hyman (Oxford University Press, £2.50). An academic account of a now forgotten trade union founded by the militant socialist Tom Mann in 1898 and dedicated to the idealistic task of organising all workers for "the ultimate realisation of an industrial commonwealth." Dr Hyman's efforts, with the aid of industrial sociology, to explain how a union with militant intentions became one of the most moderate are unconvincing.